



WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

BARRON, CHIPPEWA, CLARK, DUNN, EAU CLAIRE, PEPIN, PIERCE, POLK, ST. CROIX

May 2004

NEW

2002
Per Capita
Personal
Income -
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Unemployment rates plummet

Spring was in the air in April and workers returned to jobs. The number of jobholders in West Central Wisconsin increased from 227,000 in March to 229,830 April. The increase in employment helped reduce the regional unemployment rate from 7.4 to 5.4 percent. Unemployment rates declined in all nine counties in the West Central region as they did in all but two counties statewide.

The unadjusted unemployment

rate for the Chippewa-Eau Claire metropolitan statistical area (MSA) declined from 5.9 percent in March to 4.7 percent in April and is down from 6.0 percent one year ago. The number of employed residents in the MSA increased by 1,100 in April as the number of unemployed declined by 1,060. These changes brought total employment in April 2004 to 85,360, 3,400 higher than one year earlier.

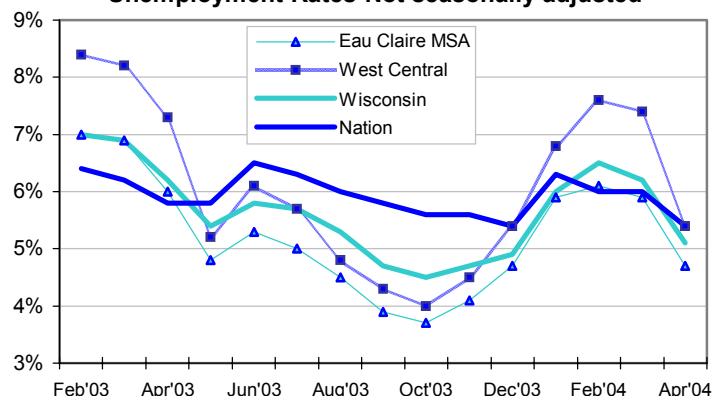
The State of Wisconsin unad-

justed unemployment rate dropped from 6.2 to 5.1 percent in April while the national rate declined from 6.0 to 5.4 percent. Seasonally adjusted the Wisconsin unemployment rate in April was 4.6 percent, the national rate was 5.6 percent, and the Eau Claire metropolitan area rate was 4.2 percent (county estimates are not seasonally adjusted).

The balance between declining unemployment and employment gains that occurred in the Eau Claire metro area did not occur in other West Central counties. In fact, in most counties in the state the reduction in the number of unemployed was greater than the increase in employed. In the West Central region the number of unemployed declined by 5,120 but employment increased only 2,815.

It is fairly typical for the labor force to decline in April but the reduction this year is much larger than normal. The seasonal changes in the labor force reflect not only the number of available jobs but also the perceived potential for work. In early spring, jobseekers entered the labor market looking

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



	Feb'03	Mar'03	Apr'03	Feb'04	Mar'04	Apr'04
Eau Claire MSA	7.0%	6.9%	6.0%	6.1%	5.9%	4.7%
West Central	8.4%	8.2%	7.3%	7.6%	7.4%	5.4%
Wisconsin	7.0%	6.9%	6.2%	6.5%	6.2%	5.1%
Nation	6.4%	6.2%	5.8%	6.0%	6.0%	5.4%

Civilian Labor Force Estimates* for West Central Wisconsin counties: April 2004

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03
Labor force	24,837	25,117	24,807	32,800	33,131	32,200	16,885	16,944	16,652	24,424	24,595	23,951	56,775	56,404	54,990
Employed	23,238	22,926	22,842	30,945	30,545	29,706	15,690	15,387	15,127	23,318	22,991	22,533	54,416	53,713	52,239
Unemployed	1,599	2,191	1,965	1,855	2,586	2,494	1,195	1,557	1,525	1,106	1,604	1,418	2,359	2,691	2,751
% unemployed	6.4	8.7	7.9	5.7	7.8	7.7	7.1	9.2	9.2	4.5	6.5	5.9	4.2	4.8	5.0

	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03
Labor force	3,299	3,316	3,256	21,603	22,011	21,351	23,387	23,851	24,168	38,824	39,773	38,928	242,834	245,142	240,303
Employed	3,116	2,984	3,015	20,598	20,469	20,059	21,961	21,681	21,557	36,548	36,319	35,591	229,830	227,015	222,669
Unemployed	183	332	241	1,005	1,542	1,292	1,426	2,170	2,611	2,276	3,454	3,337	13,004	18,127	17,634
% unemployed	5.5	10.0	7.4	4.7	7.0	6.1	6.1	9.1	10.8	5.9	8.7	8.6	5.4	7.4	7.3

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimates for West Central Wisconsin: April 2004

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03
Total Nonfarm	21.2	20.9	21.2	10.1	10.0	10.0	16.5	16.2	16.3	2.2	2.1	2.2
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1
Manufacturing	6.0	6.0	6.3	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.1	2.0	2.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Trade	3.4	3.3	3.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	2.8	2.7	2.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.7	1.7	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.6	1.5	1.6	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.6	1.4	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.2
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.6	1.6	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.7	4.7	4.6	2.2	2.2	2.2	4.6	4.5	4.6	0.5	0.5	0.6
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03	Apr '04	Mar '04	Apr '03
Total Nonfarm	10.4	10.2	10.4	14.5	14.2	14.5	26.6	26.1	26.4	78.8	77.5	77.1
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	3.1	2.9	2.8
Manufacturing	1.1	1.0	0.8	3.6	3.6	3.8	5.1	5.0	5.4	11.1	11.0	11.0
Trade	0.8	0.8	1.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	4.4	4.3	4.3	13.1	12.8	12.4
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.1	1.1	1.0	3.5	3.6	3.6
Education & Health Services	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	12.7	12.7	12.4
Leisure & Hospitality	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	3.2	3.0	3.0	7.5	7.2	7.4
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.4	3.7	3.6	3.6	8.2	7.9	8.0
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.9	3.9	3.8
Total Government	3.9	3.8	3.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.5	3.6	3.7	12.9	12.7	12.9

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2003 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

for jobs in construction, landscaping, and retail garden centers. This year, that number was larger than normal and occurred in February when the temperatures began to rise and there were signs of an improving economy.

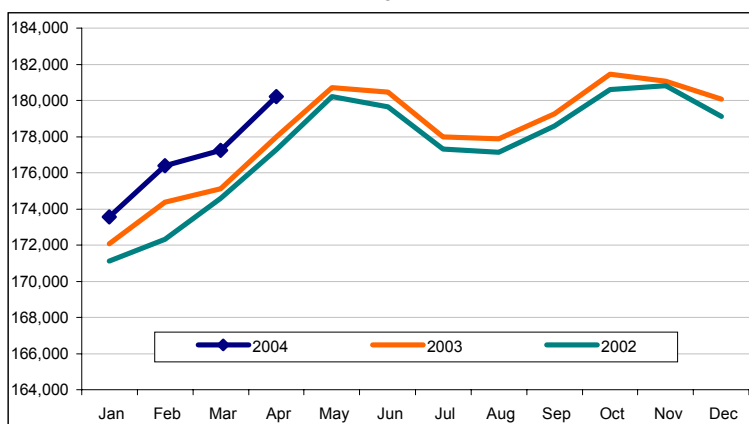
The greatest discrepancies occurred in counties where a large share of the work force is employed in Minnesota. In St. Croix County unemployment declined from 3,450 in March to 2,275 in April and the unemployment rate dropped from 8.7 to 5.9 percent. The number of residents filing a claim for unemployment benefits dropped from 781 in mid-March to 486 in mid-April. In Pierce County the number of unemployed declined from 1,540 to 1,005 and the rate dropped from 7.0 to 4.7 percent, while in Polk County, there were 740 fewer unemployed and the rate dropped from 9.1 to 6.1 percent. All three counties reported significant reductions in the number of claims for unemployment benefits and those re-

ductions continue through mid-May.

The number of claims filed for unemployment compensation benefits continues to decline in all counties in the region as workers return to jobs and not because they exhaust benefits. Continued claims for benefits in mid-March totaled 8,517 in West Central Wisconsin. By mid-April that dropped to 6,465 and by mid-May to 4,075.

From mid-March to mid-April there were 2,980 more nonfarm jobs in the region which is a slightly better increase than in previous years. Nearly 900 of those jobs were with leisure and hospitality employers, 540 with

Total Nonfarm Employment in West Central



trade employers, and another 540 with construction employers.

Manufacturing employers added 170 jobs in April. The increase follows three months of reductions but is fairly typical for the month. Employers in the metro area added roughly 100 production jobs while employers in the rural counties added 70 jobs. Even with the increase manufacturing employment is still 400 shy of the total last April of 32,200.

Find the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

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Per Capita Personal Income

	Barron	Chippewa	Clark	Dunn	Eau Claire	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St. Croix	West Central	Wisconsin
1996	\$ 18,903	\$ 20,098	\$ 17,102	\$ 18,269	\$ 20,322	\$ 19,589	\$ 21,001	\$ 18,966	\$ 24,297	\$ 20,153	\$ 23,273
1997	\$ 19,643	\$ 21,298	\$ 17,507	\$ 19,098	\$ 21,655	\$ 19,980	\$ 22,161	\$ 20,041	\$ 26,004	\$ 21,287	\$ 24,514
1998	\$ 21,634	\$ 23,158	\$ 19,510	\$ 19,922	\$ 23,368	\$ 21,607	\$ 23,572	\$ 21,239	\$ 27,367	\$ 22,871	\$ 26,175
1999	\$ 22,267	\$ 23,841	\$ 20,082	\$ 21,032	\$ 24,453	\$ 22,115	\$ 24,590	\$ 22,113	\$ 28,998	\$ 23,870	\$ 27,135
2000	\$ 23,031	\$ 25,026	\$ 20,468	\$ 21,963	\$ 25,933	\$ 23,115	\$ 25,773	\$ 23,404	\$ 30,672	\$ 25,086	\$ 28,573
2001	\$ 24,584	\$ 25,276	\$ 21,268	\$ 22,113	\$ 26,303	\$ 23,735	\$ 27,190	\$ 23,760	\$ 31,116	\$ 25,707	\$ 29,361
2002	\$ 24,420	\$ 25,655	\$ 21,691	\$ 22,859	\$ 27,301	\$ 24,495	\$ 27,676	\$ 24,210	\$ 30,756	\$ 26,135	\$ 30,050
Change from previous year											
1997	3.9%	6.0%	2.4%	4.5%	6.6%	2.0%	5.5%	5.7%	7.0%	5.6%	5.3%
1998	10.1%	8.7%	11.4%	4.3%	7.9%	8.1%	6.4%	6.0%	5.2%	7.4%	6.8%
1999	2.9%	3.0%	2.9%	5.6%	4.6%	2.4%	4.3%	4.1%	6.0%	4.4%	3.7%
2000	3.4%	5.0%	1.9%	4.4%	6.0%	4.5%	4.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.1%	5.3%
2001	6.7%	1.0%	3.9%	0.7%	1.4%	2.7%	5.5%	1.5%	1.4%	2.5%	2.8%
2002	-0.7%	1.5%	2.0%	3.4%	3.8%	3.2%	1.8%	1.9%	-1.2%	1.7%	2.3%

Source: US Dept of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, May 2004 <http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/>

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis total personal income for the counties in West Central Wisconsin increased 2.8 percent from 2001 to 2002. Total personal income in 2002 was \$11,140,144 for the combined nine county region. Over the last five-year period income increased 30 percent from \$8,566,776 in 1997.

The per capita personal income (PCPI) for West Central Wisconsin of \$26,135 in 2002 was 87 percent of the PCPI in Wisconsin. In St. Croix County the PCPI of \$30,756 which was 102 percent of Wisconsin's was the highest in the region and 7th highest in the state. Clark County with a PCPI of \$21,691 was only 72 percent of the state PCPI.

Total personal income includes income from wages and salaries, self-employment, proprietorships, assets such as dividends, interest and rent, and transfer payments such as retirement, medical assistance, veteran's benefits, unemployment insurance and income maintenance programs.

Components of total personal income can be found at the Bureau of Economic Analysis web site:

<http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/>

